UNDP report on hunger in India

2051. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to UN Development Programme report, India is the world's most hungry nation; and

(b) if so, reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Human Development Report for 2003 *inter alia* states that India is home to the largest number of hungry people at 233 million, while Sub-Saharan Africa has 183 million, China 119 million, the rest of East Asia and the Pacific 74 million, Latin America 55 million and the Arab States 32 million. However, in South Asia one person in every four goes hungry, and in Sub-Saharan Africa this share is as high as one in three.

Moreover, UNDP's HDR, 2003 itself recognises that poverty has been dramatically reduced in India. It has commended India for making serious efforts towards achieving economic growth and reduction of poverty in the country which would contribute significantly, in turn, to achieve the first Millennium Development Goal of reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty in the world by 2015.

Accidents on National Highways

2052. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the frequent road accidents especially on National Highways;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to make additional financial allocations to maintain and widen the National Highways in order to avert accidents;

(c) if so, the details of proposals of Government alongwith financial allocations; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Financial allocation for development of National Highways has been increasing over the years.

(c) During last three years the budgetary allocation for development of National Highways were as under:

Year	Amount (Rs. in Crore)
2000-2001	4489.16
2001-2002	5060.60
2002-2003	5828.80

(d) Does not arise.

Road accidents in Himachal Pradesh

†2053. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the conversion of Highways into the National Highways has become necessary due to increasing incidents of road accidents in Himachal Pradesh during the last few years;

(b) if so, whether the Central Government are considering to upgrade the Highways of the above State;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by Government to prevent the accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir. Road accident does not necessitate conversion of highways into National Highway.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.